At Our House

Old Clothes Raise Hope For Holland's Children

By MARY TINLEY, DAILY

Dorothy Callahan stopped by our house today and caught me — in an old dress of Pat's, discarded because it hasn't "the new look."

A dirndl skirt and girlishly rounded collar—at my age! Dorothy, my friend for years, grinned at my confusion.

Mary Daly

"It really doesn't do a thing for you, Mary," she said," but there's a place where it would do some good. How about sending it to Stellita Stapleton Renchard?"

"This?" I gasped. "To Stellita Renchard at our Embassy at The Hague? Of course she's young and pretty, but . . ."

"I guess you haven't heard what she's doing," said Dorothy. Then she told me the story of Stellita.

ABOUT TWO years ago when her husband was assigned a diplomatic post at The Hague, Stellita Renchard noticed the appalling condition of Dutch children. All winter they ran through icy streets barefoot and inadequately clothed. No wonder tuberculosis was rampant. They had, moreover, no safe place to play away from traffic and tumbling buildings. This troubled Stellita greatly.

All her life Stellita had been an ardent worker in the Christ Child Society in this country so that concern for underprivileged children had become a part of her very nature. On a visit to this country, she discussed the situation with Miss Mary Merrick, foundress of the Christ Child Society.

"You know what they need, don't you, Stellita?"

"I know, Miss Mary," said Stellita. "They need a branch of the Christ Child—but with my own two babies to care for—I wonder if I could do it?"

Miss Merrick merely smiled. She knew Stellita.

WHILE IN THIS country, Stellita Renchard told friends what she hoped to do and asked that they send her their discarded clothing.

On returning to The Hague, she talked with the burgomaster. He suggested that a convalescent home for children was the most vital need.

"Oh, we can't do that," said Stellita, "not yet . . ."

"How about a safe playground?" asked the burgomaster.

"That we can do," said Stellita confidently. "We have no funds but I have the promise of old clothes from the States."

The burgomaster was amused. "I'm afraid, Mrs. Renchard," he smiled, "that old clothes will hardly provide a playground—in spite of good intentions."

But he didn't know Stellita.

WHEN THE FIRST box from home came, she invited a group of Dutch women to a "sale." They must bring an old garment, she told them, as well as pay for the "new" garment acquired without coupons. The sale was over in 45 minutes; every piece eagerly bought by some of Holland's most prominent people. For instance, an old winter suit which Dorothy Callahan had discarded because it was shiny in the back, was bought by a baroness who turned the skirt inside out and wore the suit proudly to a British Embassy tea. A 20-year old evening wrap became the envied possession of one of Holland's wealthiest women. Every article found an equally eager buyer and the used but practical garments, required in addition to money as part of the transaction, were given to the poor. Thus everybody benefited.

The first sale paid for clearing a rubble-strewn lot in one of The Hague's poorer sections—a lot donated by the city.

Luckily, boxes of clothes arrived often so the sales continued. With the money realized, the playground was fenced in, one of the bombed buildings was converted into a clubhouse and now 400 underprivileged Dutch children have a safe place to play. And last Christmas this newest branch of the Christ Child Society gave a real Christmas party for hundreds of children who otherwise would have had no Christmas. The playground has become the center of neighborhood activity, with home visitors and all settlement house services, including a summer camp. So successful has the playground become that Stellita Renchard's "baby Christ Child" was asked to do similar work in other parts of Holland. Catholics and Protestants look—and marvel—at what the spirit of the Christ Child has accomplished.

STELLITA HAS hopes that her sales may some day provide the convalescent home spoken of by the burgomaster and badly needed by so many Dutch children, struggling to regain normal health.

"And so," said Dorothy Callahan as she finished her story, "you see that sending that dress and anything else you have around the house to Stellita Renchard at the U. S. Embassy at The Hague would be real Catholic action."

I bundled up the dress gladly. Why should I go around looking like my daughter's stepchild when these things could do such worthwhile work overseas?

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Mr. W. Saves $5

Denial Gift Gives Lift To Charities Workers

By GEORGE W. MONTGOMERY, Jr.
Rochester Catholic Charities

Thanksgiving Day has come and gone. For a day, we Americans paused in our daily pursuits to return thanks to God for our innumerable blessings.

For some, this is the only day of the year devoted to thanking God. The Church gives thanks daily in the beautiful Liturgy of the Mass. But for many of us, perhaps most of us, the spirit of thankfulness does not affect our life profoundly.

There are some people G. Montgomery who have counted their blessings, and who have made gratitude to God a vital part of their lives. Such a person is Mr. W. who brought a gift to Catholic Charities.

Recently, Mr. W. and his wife celebrated their golden wedding anniversary. Looking back over half a century of happy family life, they thanked God for giving them this time together, and for the seven children who joined with them in their happiness. Like all families, there had been dark days as well as bright, sorrows as well as joys, but always the blessing of a happy family group. They thanked God humbly, but words were not enough. Mr W. felt he could best express this thanks by adding to the happiness of some other family.

NOW SEVENTY-SEVEN years of age, Mr. W is retired. For many years he practiced his trade as a tailor. Now, he earns pocket money by doing small tailoring jobs. By denying himself, Mr. W. saved $5.00 from his "tobacco money." This money he brought to Catholic Charities, asking that it be used to make a family a little happier.

That was not the only gift he brought. The gift of money helped another family with seven children, to need through circumstances beyond their control. But the other gift—the one he did not realize he brought — will go on helping still other families much of the effects of selfish. That gift was the inspiration he gave the agency workers.

Case workers do need inspiration. In their work, they see sorrows and greed, of indifference. It might be easy for them to feel that the virtue of charity was seldom put into practice, if they did not see people like Mr. W.

CHARITY MEANS love of God, and love of our fellow-men as children of God. With this great principle, most of us agree. Mr. W. put this virtue into practice because he helped his fellowman for the love of God. It meant self-denial and sacrifice for him, but his happiness in doing it reflected the spirit of charity in which it was done.

Today, more perhaps than at any time in our history, there is need for a return to Christian charity. Our Bishops have expressed their concern over the rising tide of secularism. This emphasis on the material things of life, this exclusion of God from our own and our national life is directly opposed to the spirit of charity. Secularism is a threat to our whole way of life. The powerful message of the Bishops has been published in full in the Courier-Journal (Nov. 20, 1947). It would pay each of us to read and ponder over it. Essentially, it is an appeal to restore God to His proper place in our scheme of things.

This ideal can be achieved if each of us learns to put the virtue of charity into practice. Unless it is achieved, disaster looms. There is hope that it can be achieved, for there are those like Mr W. who have already achieved it in their own lives.

Mr. W. felt gratitude for a long, happy family life. Perhaps that happiness was possible because he has put God into his life. Certainly, he has been blessed. We pray that he will continue to be blessed, for the charity he has shown will always be an inspiration to us.

Religious Christmas Card Sales Reported on Upswing

Milwaukee — (RNS) — Milwaukeeans are buying more religious Christmas cards this year than in the past, a survey of local department, stationary and religious supply stores indicates.

Early sales of cards, dealers and distributors predicted, promise to be in line with a trend of the last three or four years showing a greater number of religious cards sold than 10 years ago. Furthermore, they said, the increase in the sale of religious cards is greater than that of general greeting cards.

The dealers named these causes for the increase:

Greater recognition of the religious significance of Christmas, the birthday of Christ.

More attractive and more colorful religious cards, especially among the lithographed types.

A greater variety of religious greeting cards, ranging from scenes at Bethlehem and Madonnas to those with Bible texts.

Greatest increases in sales have been reported among religious supplies dealers. Stationary stores, however, reported that their sales of cards with religious themes had also pushed upward.

The increased sales were hailed by Milwaukee clergymen.

"It is thoughtlessness that makes people neglect the real significance of Christmas," said the Rev. Charles M. O'Hara, S.J., associate professor of education at Marquette University. "After all, Christmas is a day on which we celebrate the coming of Christ. Why should we remember this by sending sophisticated cards to friends?"

Newman Club Seen Difficult Campus Job

Cleveland (NC) — More than 450 Newman Club delegates from 40 colleges and universities in the Ohio Valley Province attending a conference here were told that "it is probably more difficult to be an active member of the Newman Club today than of any other organization on the college campus."

Students from campuses in Ohio, Indiana, Michigan and Kentucky attended the three-day conference at a Solemn High Mass at St. John's Cathedral Chapel, social activities, panel discussions, a shopping tour and a style show.

Belgian Fathers Protest New Taxes

Brussels — (NC) — A mass meeting of some 30,000 fathers of large families was held here to protest what the fathers charged is lack of due consideration for heads of large families on the part of the Belgian Government. The fathers, each of whom has four or more children, were all Catholics.

At the huge meeting speakers pointed out that heads of large families, while carrying a greater share of the burden of preparing citizens for the future, are given only one vote in the choice of government, just as young men of 21 years of age. The speakers also complained that due consideration is not given to large families in the granting of family allowances and that heads of large families were placed at a disadvantage under the recent tax reductions.

FIRE LEVELS CATHEDRAL

Pensacola, Fla. (NC) — St. Mary's Cathedral, a wood building since 1874, was destroyed by a fire of undetermined origin. With the exception of the sacred vessels and a few vestments, the organ and all its furnishings, and a complete loss. Damage has been estimated at $700,000, but the cost of replacement will undoubtedly be higher.

Msgr. Lucian D. Burdue, rector-dean, administrator, and the Rev. F. G. Cuneo, assistant, unsuccessfully tried to reach the sanctuary to remove the Blessed Sacrament, but were unsuccessful, even with the aid of a smoke mask.

The fire raged on its way through the 53-year-old structure, burning through the roof in less than two hours. The 100 foot tower caught fire soon after and in a short time crashed, falling into the nave while a pile of the three bells fell to the sidewalk in front of the Cathedral, narrowly missing several firemen who were directing a stream of water into the interior of the church.

Despite repeated attempts by the priests of the cathedral, it was impossible to reach the Blessed Sacrament until four hours after the fire started, when two firemen and a Cathedral parishioner made their way to the main altar, removed the Blessed Sacrament and gave it to one of the cathedral priests, who transferred it to a convent nearby. The chalices and other sacred vessels were saved, as well as the vestments, though the latter were damaged by smoke and water. All paintings and statues and an irreplaceable library of sacred music were destroyed.

Japan Heads '48 Intentions

Rome — (NC) — Ten of next year's monthly mission intentions are concerned with the Far East, and five of the ten deal with Japan. The list of mission intentions for 1948, drawn up by the Sacred Congregation for the Propagation of the Faith, has been approved by His Holiness Pope Pius XII. Three of the monthly intentions are concerned with India and with China, and one with Indo-China.

The list of monthly intentions follows:

January: that the Catholic Church may be better known in Japan;

February: for an increase of the Christian religion in India;

March: that Christian norms may be observed in the treatment of workers in Japan;

April: that the social order in China may be preserved from atheistic communism;

May: that the Mother of God may lead the youth of Japan to Jesus;

June: that the Annamese Christians may escape unhurt from the present disturbed state of affairs;

July: that the social questions of India may be solved according to Christian principles;

August: for the Bishops and clergy in Japan;

September: for the defense of Christian schools in India;

October: for the missions in Indonesia;

November: that the rights of workers in Africa may be defended in a Christian manner, and

December: for those who hold authority in Japan.

$1,600,000 Given By Holy Childhood

Paris — (RNS) — Youthful members of the Holy Childhood Association in 34 nations have contributed $1,600,000 to save pagan children all over the world, it was announced here.

Founded in Nancy 100 years ago, the Catholic group has provided the means for baptizing 28,500,000 youngsters as well as Christian education for those of school age.

Colored Converts Flock To Immigrant Missioner

Allentown, Pa. — (NC) — Just a little over a year ago he had arrived in New York fresh from Belgium without even a speaking knowledge of English. Today he is known as the apostle of the Colored in Lehigh Valley here.

This is the story of the Rev. Paul Van Maldren, I.H.M., who is assigned to the Sacred Heart of Jesus parish here and already has to his credit close to 100 converts.

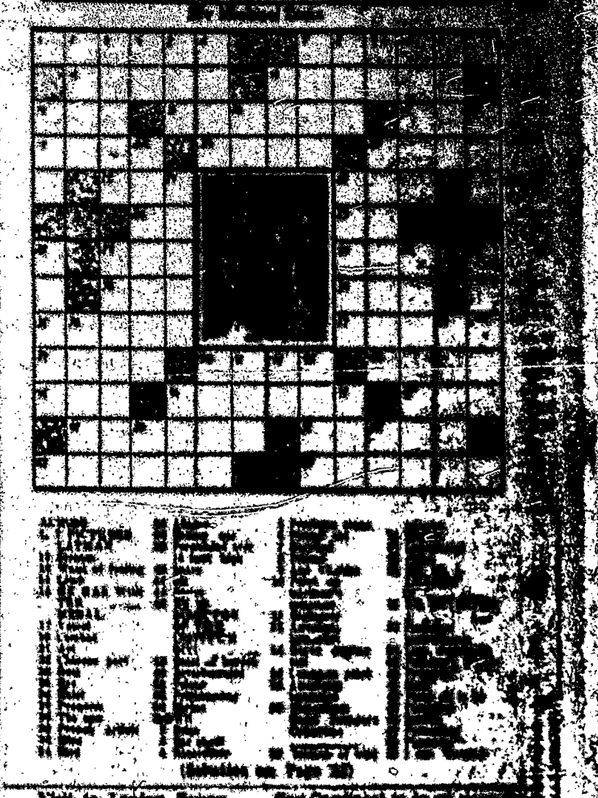
On arriving in the United States the Immaculate Heart of Mary missioner was appointed to labor among the Colored in the towns of Allentown, Bethlehem and Easton, all in Philadelphia archdiocese. He set himself to the study of English and soon determined that the way to work among the Colored people was to go out and meet them.

In a short time he was paying visits to the homes of all the Colored people in his charge. In many houses he was looked upon with suspicion, in others he was welcomed and in some he was thrown out. However, it was not long before his concern for the Colored endeared him to them and he was known as their Father Paul.

Possessed of dynamic energy, the Belgian priest began individual instructions in the Sacred Heart rectory, organized debates on religious matters among the Colored, wrote articles for the papers, distributed tracts and even made appeals over the radio.

Soon a regular group instruction course was set up and by November of 1946, only three months after coming to the States, he baptized the first group of some 50 converts, among whom was a middle-aged Colored woman who was a Holiness Protestant minister.

Who's Who? Follow the Line



(Solution on Page 20)

Visit to London Tower

London — (NC) — His Eminence Cardinal Griffin, Archbishop of Westminster, has visited the once dreaded Tower of London, now partly a museum. He was followed by the

First Cardinal to be at [illegible]

[illegible] Henry VIII Cardinal [illegible] opened the [illegible] Thomas More, [illegible] lor of England, was [illegible] in the tower.

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Rev. Andrew M. Ragouzis, S.T.L., Assistant Secretary

St. Lucy Is Their Patron

This great Saint, feasted on December 13, is patron of all who have eye troubles, particularly of the blind. In her name won't you be the eyes of the blind in the care of the Sisters of Charity at Hilo, East Africa? Six dollars will keep one blind child for a whole month.

PERFECT GIFT

The gifts of the Three Kings were symbolic, made out of love. Share [illegible] our neediest at Christmas. Don't share the [illegible] of your heart, of [illegible] sometimes children as those in the orphanage at Cuttack, Orissa. Our Lord thanked writer in kind. From a note that "[illegible]" is a gift to the Christ Child.

NEEDLEWORK

Mary was finishing those little clothes for her Baby. Trousseau and altar linens, given to a Near East mission for forty dollars, will be the swaddling clothes for Christ's manger at Christmas. Why not join the MONICA GUILD, our Altar Society, and by your dollar a month help to provide such sacred gifts?

A NEEDIEST CASE

In the village of Bafatili, near Mosul, Iraq, centers of orphan children will look to their guardians, the Sisters of St. Catherine, for a little Christmas joy. Won't you help us to provide two hundred and forty dollars for these hungry babes?

YOUR LAST CHRISTMAS!

Will it be? Have you taken out insurance for eternity? Write for information on our sodality card, whereby the Requiem Masses are offered immediately after your death.

FATHER JOSEPH THOMAS

This zealous director of our leper hospital at Shertallay, India, writes to thank us for helping him and his Sisters of the Destitute to care for over a thousand diseased and dying outcasts. He says he is remembering them at Christmas. We know you won't forget the DAMIEN LEPER FUND, named after the noble priest who himself became a leper.

LAST CALL

Are you going to send your beautiful Gift Card to a loved one at Christmas? It will say that a Near East missionary is gratefully charged [illegible] through your kindness. Write for information.

LANTERN GLOW

Like the lantern glow on the stable of Bethlehem will the sanctuary light, the sanctuary lamp, burning before the tabernacle of a Near East chapel. Twenty dollars will provide one.

BEFORE MARY'S GROTTO

On Christmas eve, before the Grotto of Lourdes built by [illegible] friends in Father Peter's orphanage in Bombay, they [illegible] gathering after the hours of Christ. Around the [illegible] priest of [illegible] three years, all the sisters of [illegible] very aged blind people. Can you help us to send them [illegible] fare, to which needed? They will [illegible] prayers for you!

THOSE HOLY HANDS

In those holy hands of the priest Bethlehem is [illegible] to make Christ. Can you send a Mass kit and [illegible] son in Christ? Six hundred others will [illegible] six-year course.

FROM NAZARETH TO BETHLEHEM

In the footsteps of Christ were made the [illegible] Sisters to bring Christ's healing mercy to [illegible] three dollars for their work in this [illegible] enough.

SHOWCASE

The shop windows are full of gay [illegible] The [illegible] shelves in our great [illegible] provide a grateful [illegible] in Southern Italy.

Send all [illegible]

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